

Reading Essentials and Study Guide

networks

Becoming a World Power, 1872-1917

Lesson 2 *The Spanish-American War*

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How are empires built?

Reading HELPDESK

Content Vocabulary

yellow journalism type of sensational, biased, and often false reporting for the sake of attracting readers

autonomy the quality of or state of being self-governing

jingoism extreme nationalism marked by aggressive foreign policy

Academic Vocabulary

intervene to get involved in the affairs of another

volunteer person who joins the military by choice

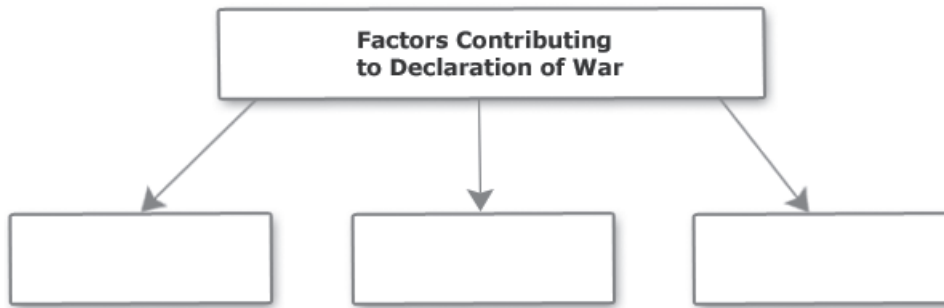
Reading Essentials and Study Guide *Cont.*

networks

Becoming a World Power, 1872-1917

TAKING NOTES: Organizing

ACTIVITY As you read about the Spanish-American War, complete a graphic organizer like the one below by listing the circumstances that contributed to war with Spain.



IT MATTERS BECAUSE...

The United States defeated Spanish troops in Cuba and the Philippines during the Spanish-American War. Afterward, the United States annexed the Philippines and became an imperial power.

The Coming of War

GUIDING QUESTION Why was the United States willing to go to war with Spain over Cuba?

By 1898, Cuba and Puerto Rico were two of Spain's last colonies in the Western Hemisphere. Cubans had sometimes rebelled against Spanish rule, however. Many Americans thought the Spanish were tyrants. The United States declared war on Spain. The fighting lasted only a few months, but the war greatly changed the position of the United States on the world stage.

The Cuban Rebellion Begins

Cuba was one of Spain's oldest colonies in the Americas. Its sugarcane plantations made Spain very wealthy. They produced about one-third of the world's sugar in the mid-1800s. About one-third of the Cuban population was enslaved until Spain ended slavery in 1886. The enslaved people were forced to work for wealthy landowners on the plantations.

In 1868 Cuban rebels declared independence and launched a guerrilla war against Spanish authorities. The rebellion ended a decade later because the Cubans did not have enough support. Many Cuban rebels then went to the United States, including their leader, José Martí.

The United States and Cuba had become closely linked economically by the early 1890s. Cuba exported a lot of its sugar to the United States. Americans had invested about \$50 million in Cuba's sugar plantations, mines, and railroads. These economic ties created a crisis in 1894. This is when the United States put a new tariff on sugar that hurt Cuba's economy. The Cuban rebels launched a new rebellion in February 1895 because they were having financial trouble. Martí died during the fighting, but the rebels took control of eastern Cuba. They declared independence and created the Republic of Cuba in September 1895.

Reading Essentials and Study Guide *Cont.*

**networks**

Becoming a World Power, 1872-1917

America Supports Cuba

President Grover Cleveland said the United States was neutral when the uprising started. But stories of Spanish acts of violence in two of the nation's major newspapers, the *New York Journal* and the *New York World*, caused many Americans to take the side of the rebels. Writers exaggerated or made up stories to attract readers. This type of reporting became known as **yellow journalism**. Although some stories were invented, Cubans did indeed suffer greatly.

The Spanish sent nearly 200,000 troops to the island to end the rebellion. General Valeriano Weyler was made governor. The rebels' attacks destroyed a lot of property. Some of the property belonged to Americans. By destroying American property, the rebels hoped that the United States would become involved in the war. To prevent villagers from helping the rebels, Weyler put hundreds of thousands of rural men, women, and children into "reconcentration camps." Tens of thousands of people died of starvation and disease in these camps.

Calls for War

In 1897 Republican William McKinley became president of the United States. In September 1897, he asked Spain if the United States could help negotiate an end to the conflict. This way the United States would not have to **intervene** in the war. Spain removed Weyler from office and offered the Cubans **autonomy** if Cuba remained part of the Spanish Empire. Autonomy is a population's right to its own government. The rebels refused to negotiate.

Spain's compromises with the rebels angered many Spanish loyalists in Cuba. The loyalists rioted in Havana in January 1898. McKinley sent the battleship USS *Maine* to Havana to protect Americans living there. On February 9, 1898, the *New York Journal* printed a letter written by the Spanish ambassador to the United States. The letter said McKinley was "weak." The United States was greatly angered over the insult.

Then, on February 15, 1898, the *Maine* exploded in Havana Harbor. People are still unsure why the *Maine* exploded. Many Americans believed the Spanish did it. "Remember the *Maine*!" became the saying for those who wanted to declare war against Spain.

McKinley faced a lot of pressure to go to war. Within the Republican Party, **jingoisism** was very strong. Jingoism is strong, forceful nationalism. On April 11, 1898, McKinley asked Congress to allow war.

On April 19, Congress said Cuba was independent. Congress demanded that Spain leave the island, and it allowed the president to use armed force. On April 24, Spain declared war on the United States.

PROGRESS CHECK

Examining What events led to the war with Spain in 1898?

Reading Essentials and Study Guide *Cont.*

**networks**

Becoming a World Power, 1872-1917

A War on Two Fronts

GUIDING QUESTION How was the Spanish-American War different from earlier U.S. wars?

The U.S. Navy was ready for war with Spain. The navy blockaded Cuba. Commodore George Dewey, commander of the U.S. naval troop based in Hong Kong, was ordered to attack the Spanish fleet based in the Philippines, which was then a Spanish colony. U.S. naval planners wanted to stop the Spanish fleet from sailing east to attack the United States.

The Battle of Manila Bay

On May 1, 1898, the U.S. ships in Dewey's group entered Manila Bay in the Philippines. They quickly destroyed the old and less powerful Spanish fleet.

Dewey's quick victory surprised McKinley. The army quickly put together 20,000 troops to sail from San Francisco to the Philippines. The U.S. troops took control of the Spanish island of Guam on their way to the Philippines.

Dewey contacted Emilio Aguinaldo while he waited for the U.S. troops to arrive. Aguinaldo was a Filipino revolutionary leader who led a failed rebellion against the Spanish in 1896. U.S. troops took control of the Philippine capital of Manila while Aguinaldo and his rebels took control of most of the islands.

American Forces in Cuba

The Spanish in Cuba were not prepared for war. Their soldiers were weak and sick, and their warships were old with untrained crews. If the United States could defeat the Spanish fleet, Spain would not be able to supply its troops in Cuba. Eventually, Spain would have to surrender.

The U.S. Army was not prepared for war either. The army had recruited **volunteers**, but they did not have the resources to train them. They could not provide weapons and supplies to them. One volunteer cavalry unit was a mix of cowboys, miners, and law officers known as the "Rough Riders."

Between June 22 and 24, about 17,000 U.S. troops landed east of Santiago, Cuba. Well protected by powerful guns on the shore, the Spanish fleet had control over Santiago Harbor. Americans wanted to capture those guns to drive the Spanish fleet out of the harbor and into battle with the U.S. fleet waiting nearby. The Rough Riders went with the army as it moved toward Santiago. Colonel Theodore Roosevelt was second in command.

On July 1, U.S. troops attacked a village near Santiago and the San Juan Heights. The Rough Riders and the all-African American 9th and 10th Cavalry Regiments attacked and held Kettle Hill, then helped capture San Juan Hill.

In Santiago, the Spanish commander panicked and ordered the Spanish fleet to leave the harbor. On July 3, U.S. warships attacked them. They destroyed every Spanish vessel. Later, the Spanish in Santiago surrendered. The U.S. troops were left to occupy nearby Puerto Rico.

Reading Essentials and Study Guide *Cont.*

**networks**

Becoming a World Power, 1872-1917

PROGRESS CHECK

Summarizing On what two fronts was the Spanish-American War fought?

An American Empire

GUIDING QUESTION How did the United States develop an overseas empire?

American and Spanish leaders met to discuss the terms for a peace treaty. Americans thought about what to do about their newly gained lands. Cuba would receive its independence as promised. Spain had agreed to the U.S. control of Guam and Puerto Rico. The big question was what to do with the Philippines. The United States faced a difficult choice. It had to decide if it wanted to stay true to its republican ideals or become an imperial power that ruled a foreign country without the approval of its people. The issue created a strong political debate.

The Debate Over Annexation

Many people considered the economic and military benefits of taking the Philippines. They would provide the United States with another Pacific naval base. It could be a place to stop on the way to China and a large market for U.S. goods. Other supporters believed it was the nation's job to help people and countries that were not as well off.

Other Americans argued that an empire would cost too much. They thought the cost would not be worth the economic benefits it would provide. Some worried that competition from cheap Filipino labor would drive down U.S. wages. Still others believed imperialism went against U.S. principles. President McKinley eventually decided to annex the islands.

On December 10, 1898, the United States and Spain signed the Treaty of Paris. This gave Cuba its independence. Also, the United States got Puerto Rico and Guam and paid Spain \$20 million for the Philippines. After a big debate, the Senate approved the treaty in February 1899. The United States had become an imperial power.

The Platt Amendment

The United States had promised to give Cuba its independence, but President McKinley attached conditions to the new Cuban constitution. Senator Orville Platt submitted the Platt Amendment. It said the following:

1. Cuba could not make any treaty with another nation that would weaken its independence;
2. Cuba had to allow the United States to buy or lease naval stations in Cuba;
3. Cuba's debts had to be kept low to prevent foreign countries from landing troops to make them pay; and
4. the United States would have the right to protect Cuban independence and keep order.

Reading Essentials and Study Guide *Cont.*

**networks**

Becoming a World Power, 1872-1917

The Cubans reluctantly added the amendment to their constitution. The Platt Amendment effectively made Cuba an American protectorate. It remained in effect until it was canceled in 1934.

Governing Puerto Rico

In 1900 Congress passed the Foraker Act to create a civil government for Puerto Rico. The law allowed an elected legislature, and a governor and executive council that were appointed by the president. Supreme Court rulings said that Puerto Ricans were not U.S. citizens and so did not have rights of citizens.

Congress slowly allowed Puerto Ricans more self-government. In 1917 it gave Puerto Ricans U.S. citizenship. Thirty years later, Puerto Ricans were allowed to elect their own governor. A debate began over whether Puerto Rico should become a state, become independent, or continue as a self-governing commonwealth of the United States. The debate over Puerto Rico's status continues today.

Rebellion in the Philippines

In 1899 there was fighting in the Philippines. Emilio Aguinaldo ordered his troops to attack the 126,000 American soldiers who had been sent there. The conflict continued for almost three years. The U.S. military established reconcentration camps to separate Filipino guerrillas from civilians. This allowed the military to fight the Filipino guerrillas. Thousands died from disease and starvation in the camps. Many U.S. soldiers died fighting the guerillas.

The first U.S. civilian governor of the islands, William Howard Taft, tried to win over the Filipinos by improving education, transportation, and health care. These reforms slowly lessened Filipino hostility.

In March 1901, U.S. troops captured Aguinaldo. On July 4, 1902, the United States declared the war over. The Filipinos slowly got more control over their government. By the mid-1930s, they elected their own congress and president. In 1946 they gained full independence from the United States.

PROGRESS CHECK

Explaining What did the United States do to expand its territorial interests?
